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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4890

INFO RUSSQD/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 98016 JUL 79 09 42z *Shildse*

RUSBAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 7131

RUQMHR/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE 344

RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 1772

RUJLPG/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 630

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~~SECRET~~ SECTION 1 OF 3 KABUL 9648

EXDIS

E.O. 12865: RDS-1 7/26/99 (FLATIN, BRUCE A.) OR-N

TAGS: AEMR, PEPR, AF, UR, US, FK, IR, CH

SUBJECT: (S) DEMARCHE TO SOVIET AMBASSADOR AT KABUL ABOUT EVACUA-  
TION OF AMERICAN DEPENDENTS

REFS: (A) MOSCOW 18979, (B) STATE 189714

1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. SUMMARY: DURING THE CHARGE'S CALL ON THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR CONCERNING THE AMERICAN EVACUATION FROM KABUL, AMBASSADOR PUZANOV REFLECTED THE IRRITATION OF THE AFGHAN AUTHORITIES OVER THE USG PUBLICITY ATTENDING THIS OPERATION. PUZANOV ALSO COMMENTED ON AFGHAN EFFORTS TO TRIM THE SIZE OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY AT KABUL. END SUMMARY.

3. ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, 1979, THE CHARGE CALLED ON ALEXANDER M. PUZANOV, SOVIET AMBASSADOR AT KABUL AND DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS. THE CHARGE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE A/DCM.

4. THE CHARGE EXPLAINED THAT HE WAS SEEING PUZANOV AT THE INSTRUCTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE. HE OBSERVED THAT A SIMILAR DEMARCHE HAD BEEN CONDUCTED EARLIER BY OUR EMBASSY IN MOSCOW WITH THE SOVIET MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. (REFTEL A). THE CHARGE WENT OVER THE TALKING POINTS SUGGESTED IN REFTEL B, LEAVING AN INFORMAL COPY WITH THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR.

5. PUZANOV THANKED THE CHARGE FOR HIS PRESENTATION, BUT STATED THAT HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND "YOUR WORRY ABOUT POTENTIAL HARM TO YOUR CITIZENS HERE." WHEN THE CHARGE REPLIED THAT, ACCORDING TO INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, THERE HAD BEEN A WORSENING OF THE INSURRECTION IN THE AFGHAN COUNTRYSIDE, PUZANOV INTERRUPTED TO SAY THAT WAS NOT WHAT HE MEANT. HE WAS WONDERING WHY THE AMERICAN EMBASSY WAS CONCERNED THAT THERE MIGHT BE POSSIBLE HARM TO ITS CITIZENS DURING THE EVACUATION OPERATIONS.

6. THE CHARGE REPLIED THAT HE HOPED THAT THE DRA WOULD NOT STAND IN THEIR WAY. THE CHARGE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD SEEN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DOST ON JULY 23, AS A MATTER OF COURTESY, TO EXPLAIN THE U.S. EVACUATION DECISION. HE TOLD PUZANOV THAT HE HAD MADE TWO POINTS CLEAR TO DOST:

(A) THE EVACUATION DECISION WAS NOT POLITICALLY MOTIVATED, BUT WAS SOLELY PRECAUTIONARY, REFLECTING USG CONCERN OVER THE SECURITY OF AMERICAN DEPENDENTS;

(B) THE USG WOULD NOT SEEK PUBLICITY CONCERNING THIS ACTION, BUT, IF ASKED, WOULD HAVE TO RESPOND TRUTHFULLY, BUT IN A LOW-KEY FASHION.

7. THE CHARGE WENT ON TO EXPLAIN TO PUZANOV IN SOME DETAIL HOW THE INFORMATION CAME OUT AT THE JULY 23 PRESS CONFERENCE IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT. HE TOLD PUZANOV THAT DOST CALLED HIM IN ON JULY 24TH TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THIS PUBLICITY, NOTING THAT THE CHARGE HAD ASSURED HIM THE PREVIOUS DAY THAT THE U.S. WOULD NOT INITIATE ANY. THE CHARGE OBSERVED THAT DOST STRESSED TWO POINTS IN THIS MEETING:

(A) THAT THERE WERE NO SECURITY PROBLEMS IN KABUL OR ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY, AND

(B) THE VERY FACT THAT THE AMERICANS ARE MOVING OUT CREATES A "FALSE IMPRESSION" TO THE WORLD

8. PUZANOV THEN CHANGED THE SUBJECT, NOTING THAT THERE HAD BEEN AN AFGHAN RADIO BROADCAST ON JULY 24TH STATING THAT THE DRA HAD PROPOSED A REDUCTION IN THE U.S. EMBASSY STAFF. THE CHARGE OBSERVED THAT, ALTHOUGH DOST HAD MADE SOME VAGUE ALLUSION TO POSSIBLE STAFF CUT-BACKS FOR VARIOUS EMBASSIES IN KABUL DURING THE FIRST CONVERSATION, ON JULY 23RD, HE DID NOT MENTION THAT SUCH A DIPLOMATIC NOTE WAS ON THE WAY IN THE JULY 24TH CONVERSATION.

9. THE CHARGE OBSERVED THAT THE TEXT OF THE AFGHAN NOTE SUGGESTED THAT IT WAS A CIRCULAR NOTE; THEREFORE, THE AMERICAN DID NOT KNOW WHETHER OTHER EMBASSIES, SUCH AS THE SOVIET EMBASSY, HAD ALSO RECEIVED COPIES. PUZANOV REPLIED THAT HE HAD ONLY LOOKED AT THOSE NOTES WHICH HAD ARRIVED AT HIS EMBASSY UP UNTIL NOON OF JULY 24TH, AND HE HAD NOT YET SEEN ANY SUCH NOTE.

10. THE CHARGE NOTED THAT THE SUBSEQUENT AFGHAN MEDIA TREATMENT ABOUT THE NOTE IMPLIED THAT IT APPLIED ONLY TO THE AMERICAN MISSION. HE EXPRESSED REGRET OVER THE DRA'S ACTION AND OBSERVED THAT THE DRA SEEMED TO BE OVERREACTING TO THE EVACUATION DECISION. THE CHARGE RECALLED THAT OFFICERS OF THIS EMBASSY HAD OFTEN TOLD AFGHAN AND SOVIET OFFICIALS THAT THE U.S. IS GIVING NO HELP TO THE REBEL SIDE, BUT WE CONTINUE TO SEE VEILED HINTS IN THE AFGHAN MEDIA ABOUT ALLEGED AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT.

11. THE CHARGE OBSERVED THAT HIS MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENT WAS ONE MORE SAD MOMENT IN THE RECENT HISTORY OF AFGHANISTAN. HE RECALLED THAT TWO YEARS AGO, AFGHANISTAN HAD FRIENDLY, GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALMOST EVERY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. NOW, FIFTEEN MONTHS AFTER THE KHALQI REVOLUTION, IT STILL HAS GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE USSR, BUT BAD RELATIONS WITH ITS THREE OTHER NEIGHBORS, CHINA, PAKISTAN, AND IRAN. FURTHERMORE, THE KHALQI REGIME IS WORSENING ITS RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. FOR THAT MATTER, HE OBSERVED, AFGHAN RELATIONS WITH THE REST OF THE WESTERN COUNTRIES DO NOT SEEM TO BE ALL THAT GOOD EITHER. THE CHARGE TOLD PUZANOV THAT HE DID NOT KNOW WHERE ALL OF THIS WOULD END. HE WONDERED WHETHER

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INFO RUSBCO/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 9662  
RUSSAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 7152  
RUOHMR/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE 345  
RUHMNO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 1773  
RUHJPG/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 639  
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3 E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 3 KABUL 5648

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EXDIS

L.O. 12005: RDS-1 7/26/99 (PLATIN, BRUCE A.) OR-M

PRIME MINISTER KAFIZULLAH AMIN IS SOMEHOW TRYING TO DRIVE AMERICA INTO THE OPPOSITION. CERTAINLY, THE CHARGE DID NOT FIND AMIN'S REACTIONS ALL THAT RATIONAL OR UNDERSTANDABLE. THE CHARGE EXPLAINED THAT HE WAS BEING FRANK WITH PUZANOV, BECAUSE HE REGARDED HIM AS A COLLEAGUE AND ALSO BECAUSE HE WAS ADDRESSING HIM IN HIS CAPACITY AS DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS. HE STRESSED THAT THE VIEWS HE WAS EXPRESSING ON THE TOPICS OUTSIDE THE EVACUATION SITUATION WERE HIS OWN, AND WERE NOT BEING PRESENTED UNDER THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT.

12. PUZANOV, INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, ELECTED AT THIS POINT TO RETURN TO THE QUESTION OF THE SIZE OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN KABUL. HE OBSERVED THAT THE NUMBER OF U.S. EMPLOYEES APPEARED TO HAVE INCREASED SINCE THE REVOLUTION. THE CHARGE RESPONDED THAT THAT WAS NOT TRUE. HE STATED THAT IN REALITY THE SIZE OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY WAS NOW SMALLER THAN IT EVER HAD BEEN OVER THE LAST TWENTY YEARS. HE OPINED THAT THE AFGHANS MAY HAVE GOTTEN THE IMPRESSION OF INCREASED NUMBERS BECAUSE THE EMBASSY HAD RECENTLY BEEN PLACING ALMOST ALL ADMINISTRATIVE AND STAFF EMPLOYEES ON THE DIPLOMATIC LIST IN ORDER TO ACCORD THEM THE DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY WHICH OTHERWISE THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT WAS DENYING IN VIOLATION OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE "VIENNA CONVENTION ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS."

13. PUZANOV REPLIED THAT HE HAD "ONLY THE SLIGHTEST INTEREST" IN THE SIZE OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY'S STAFF. HE EXPLAINED THAT, ALTHOUGH HIS OWN DIPLOMATIC STAFF HAD INCREASED CONSIDERABLY SINCE THE REVOLUTION TO MEET INCREASED ADVISORY SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS, THERE HAD BEEN NO INCREASE AT ALL IN THE SOVIET EMBASSY'S TECHNICAL AND SUPPORT STAFF. FOR EXAMPLE, EXPLAINED PUZANOV, HIS EMBASSY IS CURRENTLY RELYING UPON SOVIET ENGINEERS ASSIGNED TO KABUL MUNICIPALITY AS ADVISORS TO HELP BUILD AN APARTMENT HOUSE IN THE SOVIET COMPOUND DURING THEIR FREE TIME. AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE, HE STATED THAT ALTHOUGH THERE HAD BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF SOVIET CHILDREN AT KABUL, THE SOVIET SCHOOL STILL GOT ALONG WITH ONLY A PRINCIPAL AND TWO OR THREE TEACHERS ASSIGNED OFFICIAL FROM MOSCOW, DEPENDING FOR THE REST OF THEIR TEACHING STAFF ON LOCALLY HIRED WIVES OF SOVIET PERSONNEL. PUZANOV OBSERVED THAT THE SOVIET MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FINANCE WERE SO "STINGY" THAT IT TOOK A "TON OF PAPERWORK" TO GET ANYTHING EXTRA OUT OF THEM FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT; THEREFORE, HE RARELY TRIED.

14. RETURNING AGAIN TO THE EVACUATION QUESTION, PUZANOV CHIDED THE USG FOR HAVING PROMISED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO PUBLICITY, AND NOTED THAT THE PUBLICITY HAD APPEARED ON THE VERY NEXT DAY. THE CHARGE REPLIED THAT HE HAD ALREADY EXPLAINED HOW THIS HAD HAPPENED.

15. PUZANOV THEN WENT ON TO ADDRESS THE CHARGE'S COMMENTS ON AFGHANISTAN'S WORSENING RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN, IRAN, AND CHINA. HE NOTED THAT ALL THREE COUNTRIES HAD BEEN FOLLOWING "POLICIES OF INTERVENTION AND AGGRESSION AGAINST AFGHANISTAN, MOUNTED FROM THEIR TERRITORIES." HE NOTED THAT, IN SPITE OF THESE PROVOCATIONS, AFGHANISTAN WAS TAKING "WIDE STEPS" TO IMPROVE ITS RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS. PUZANOV CITED DOST'S RECENT TRIP TO ISLAMABAD, AND OBSERVED THAT THE AFGHANS AND PAKISTANIS STILL APPEAR TO BE PREPARING FOR THE TOP-LEVEL VISIT TO AFGHANISTAN OF PAKISTANI FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISOR AGHA SHAHI.

16. WITH REFERENCE TO IRAN, PUZANOV RECALLED THAT PRESIDENT TARAKI AND PRIME MINISTER AMIN HAD RECENTLY STATED THAT THEY WERE READY TO EXTEND A HAND OF FRIENDSHIP TO IRAN, IN SPITE OF THE LATTER'S INTERVENTION POLICIES.

17. PUZANOV THEN TURNED TO AFGHAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS, NOTING THAT THE AFGHANS HAD BEEN TRYING TO IMPROVE THIS RELATIONSHIP, IN SPITE OF APPARENT OPPOSITION ON THE AMERICAN SIDE, SUCH AS THE US DECISION TO CUT OFF AID. HE NOTED THAT THREE AFGHAN MINISTERS HAD ATTENDED THE AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION, OBSERVING THAT THAT SIGNIFIED A STRONG AFGHAN DESIRE TO DEMONSTRATE ITS DESIRE FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH AMERICA. THE CHARGE REPLIED THAT WE HAD NOTED AND APPRECIATED HAVING THREE MINISTERS AT THE RECEPTION, BUT THAT THE USG LOOKS FOR MORE IMPORTANT, CONCRETE SIGNS THAT THE AFGHANS REALLY INTEND FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S.

18. AS AN EXAMPLE OF AN IMPORTANT AREA IN WHICH THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOT AT ALL BEEN HELPFUL, THE CHARGE CITED THE FRUSTRATING INVESTIGATION OF THE DEATH OF AMBASSADOR DUBS. NOTING THAT THERE WERE SEVERAL MYSTERIOUS ASPECTS OF THIS CASE WHICH NEEDED TO BE CLARIFIED, THE CHARGE REGRETTED THAT THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT HAD NOT EVEN BOTHERED TO REPLY TO OUR LAST FOUR DIPLOMATIC NOTES ON THIS SUBJECT. HE EXPLAINED THAT AMONG THE BASIC PROBLEMS IN THIS INVESTIGATION ARE SOME GRAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE WEAPONS INVOLVED. THE AMERICAN EMBASSY HAD ASKED TO SEE THE WEAPONS, BUT HAD BEEN REFUSED. THE EMBASSY SUBSEQUENTLY HAD ASKED FOR TEST-FIRED BULLETS FROM THE WEAPONS, BUT THAT REQUEST HAD BEEN IGNORED. A SO-CALLED "OFFICIAL REPORT" ABOUT THE INCIDENT LISTED FOUR WEAPONS FOUND BY THE AFGHAN AUTHORITIES AT THE SCENE. NONE OF THEM COULD HAVE PRODUCED THE .22 CALIBER BULLETS THAT KILLED AMBASSADOR DUBS. THE CHARGE TOLD PUZANOV THAT WE HAD ASKED THE DRA FOR AN EXPLANATION OF THIS DISCREPANCY, BUT HAD NEVER RECEIVED AN ANSWER.

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INFO RUSSGD/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 9863

RUSBAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 7133

RUQMKR/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE 346

RUEKHO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 1774

RUMJPG/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 640

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SECRET SECTION 3 OF 3 KABUL 5648

EXDIS

E.O. 12861: RDS-1 7/26/99 (FLATIN, BRUCE A.) OR-M

19. AMBASSADOR PUZANOV MADE NO COMMENT ABOUT THE DUBS CASE, BUT OBSERVED THAT "SIGNS MUST BE SHOWN BY BOTH SIDES." IN THIS CONNECTION, HE ONCE AGAIN COMPLAINED ABOUT USG PUBLICITY ABOUT THE EVACUATION, OBSERVING THAT THE "FORTHCOMING" AFGHAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE US DOES NOT DESERVE SUCH A REACTION. THE CHARGE REPLIED THAT THAT IS A MATTER FOR THE USG TO DECIDE. PUZANOV ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THAT WAS INDEED THE BUSINESS OF THE USG. HE WENT ON, HOWEVER, TO ADD THAT, ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT GOING TO ADVISE US, IT WAS HIS OBSERVATION THAT IN DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE THERE MUST BE A MUTUAL APPROACH TOWARD GOOD RELATIONS. PUZANOV CITED THE SALT II PROCESS IN THIS CONNECTION. HE SAID THAT HE HAD SEEN A SOVIET PRESS REPORT OF SECRETARY VANCE'S MOST RECENT SPEECH ON SALT II, AND HAD FOUND IT "BRILLIANT AND CONVINCING."

20. RETURNING FINALLY TO THE BASIC SUBSTANCE OF THE DEMARCHE ITSELF, PUZANOV SAID, "WITH REFERENCE TO YOUR APPEAL TO US ABOUT THE EVACUATION SECURITY, IT'S MISPLACED." HE EXPRESSED HIS CONFIDENCE THAT THE AFGHANS WOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO HELP. THE CHARGE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE EVACUATION WOULD RECEIVE AFGHAN ASSISTANCE AND UNDERSTANDING.

21. TURNING TO PUZANOV'S COMMENTS ABOUT IRANIAN AND PAKISTANI INTERVENTION IN AFGHAN AFFAIRS, THE CHARGE OBSERVED THAT SUCH ALLEGED AGRESSION HAS NOT YET BEEN PROVED. HE NOTED THAT IF THE DRA HAS ANY PROBLEM, IT'S WITH ITS OWN PEOPLE. PUZANOV DECLARED THAT THERE IS DEFINITE EVIDENCE OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION, DECLARING, "IF IT REALLY ONLY INVOLVED A PROBLEM WITH THE AFGHAN PEOPLE, WHY SHOULD THE DRA SAY THAT THERE HAS BEEN INTERVENTION?" PUZANOV WENT ON TO STATE THAT PAKISTANI INTERVENTION IN PARTICULAR WAS "UNDENIABLY EVIDENT." HE OBSERVED, HOWEVER, THAT CURRENT HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS BETWEEN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN ARE A GOOD IDEA, COMMENTING "LET THEM DECIDE IT." PUZANOV ALSO HOPED THAT THE AFGHANS AND IRANIANS COULD WORK OUT THEIR PROBLEMS, OBSERVING THAT THIS WOULD HELP MAINTAIN PEACE IN THIS REGION OF THE WORLD.

22. IN CONCLUSION, PUZANOV MENTIONED A FEW DETAILS OF THE CURRENT SOVIET ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN AFGHANISTAN. HE STATED THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD NOW ALLOCATED \$1.5 BILLION IN CREDITS FOR THE AFGHAN FIVE-YEAR PLAN. HE FURTHER CONFIRMED THAT APPROXIMATELY 1,500 AFGHAN STUDENTS ARE BEING TRAINED IN THE SOVIET UNION.

23. COMMENT: I FOUND IT NOTEWORTHY THAT PUZANOV, UNLIKE HIS COLLEAGUE IN MOSCOW (REFFEL A), DID NOT REJECT MY DEMARCHE AS UNDULY INVOLVING THE SOVIETS IN A BILATERAL US-AFGHAN MATTER. INDEED, PUZANOV APPEARED TO BE REMARKABLY INTERESTED IN SUBJECTS WHICH WOULD NOT ORDINARILY BE THE BUSINESS OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY, SUCH AS OUR PUBLICIZING THE EVACUATION OPERATION AND THE SIZE OF OUR EMBASSY STAFF. HE DOES NOT ALWAYS TAKE PAINS TO CONCEAL HIS ROLE AS SOVIET PROCONSUL HERE.

24. I ALSO FOUND IT INTERESTING THAT PUZANOV DID NOT ELECT TO ARGUE WITH ME THAT MY EVACUATION DECISION WAS WRONG.

25. FINALLY, I WOULD LIKE TO MENTION THAT ON THE BACK OF THE SOFA ON WHICH I WAS SEATED, THERE WAS PLACED PROMINENTLY A 9-INCH "SPEAKER", ONE I HAD NEVER SEEN THERE ON MY PREVIOUS CALLS. I CAN ONLY WONDER WHETHER IT WAS SOME CRUDE KIND OF MICROPHONE.

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